

I have lived in Montgomery County since 1965. I am writing to voice my opposition to the imposition of COVID-19 proof of vaccination (vaccine passport) in the county via "*Resolution to approve a Board of Health Regulation to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the County – Vaccination Requirements to Enter Bars, Restaurants, Fitness Centers, and Other Covered Establishments*" or any other similar resolution. Implementing a vaccine passport will not prevent spread of COVID-19, will hurt business in the county and will place undue burden on citizens and residents of the county.

Data from the CDC shows that being vaccinated does not prevent one from contracting or spreading COVID-19, especially the more recent variants. One only needs to look at the recent rapid spread of the Omicron variant amongst the fully-vaccinated population to see how a vaccine passport, while well meaning, would be utterly useless. At a personal level, all members of my family are fully-vaccinated. That did not prevent any of us from contracting COVID-19 over Christmas holiday. It spread from one fully-vaccinated family member to another in a clearly defined pattern. Being fully-vaccinated, my entire family would all have had vaccine passports based on the proposal, but could still have spread COVID-19 to anyone at an establishment requiring a passport, especially during the time before symptoms became apparent.

County businesses will suffer due to the vaccine passport requirement. There are many folks in the county and nearby jurisdictions that will simply not go to Montgomery County businesses requiring a vaccine passport. They realize that a vaccine passport will not prevent the spread of COVID-19 and will only serve as an intrusion on the county populace.

Doug Ortega